arrived,) were very impressive — But the Egyptian heads, big as a hogs-head, are grander in impression. The Nineveh's have a smirk, not that placid, serene, grandeur — A great arm & fist, belonging to one Egyptian head, startled us at first as to what the monstrous, porphyry thing was —

We met Dr. J. E. Gray, who recommended the Blacas collection, not open generally but visible on demand — There were exquisite gems of cameos & intaglios, amethyst, topaz, carnelian, jacynth — One of Augustus 5 inches large! — So exquisite in delicate lovely expression all of them! — gold ornaments Etruscan, Greek, Roman — necklaces, earrings, broches, bracelets, so graceful & unique — The silver casket of a Roman bride, horse trappings, (great silver necklaces) pins for togas, girdles &c. &c. Then Eastern ornaments, Norwegian, Old Irish, some modern gifts of Napoleon III. to great people who had [illegible] them, Abyssinian Theodore's helmet, shield & bracelets, & strange, uncouth, precious metal Abyssinian things —

Dr. Gray wanted to show them all the reading-room, & looked up Mr. Carruthers, the assistant botanist, & he very kindly took us in — But it would take more time than I have to describe that superb room, with its most convenient arrangements, free to any student; & then the library, with 20 miles of shelves for books recently added! so compact, & airy & light in its arrangements — Then he took us through the Roman again, to see such a beautiful, beautiful bust of Esculapius, say the God of healing, & such an Apollo, two of the greatest treasures handed down from ~~the~~ antiquity! — Dr. Hooker's read that night please Darwin, &c. Love warmly to all,

Jane L. G.

Kew – Feb. 17th – '68

My dear Sue,

Only a hasty minute today for you all, for I was in London all day yesterday, & am expecting Mrs Dabney this morn., so if I don't get this sheet finished, I shall put it off until next Wednesday again. There are two regular mails a week now, the Cunard Wednesdays, & Inman Saturdays, & as the steamers stop at Queenstown, we have until Wednesday & Saturday to write, so letters posted here before 4 P.M., should be in time for Queenstown — But I shall try & watch a little to see when my letters reach you, lest we trust too much, & they miss the mail.

Wednesday I stayed in the house all day, about sun-set, Dr. Gray came rushing up in his eager way to hurry me down to the door to meet Miss Coleman, who had been calling at the Hookers, & had only a minute, as she was going to London to dine, & had then to drive home & dress! where she is some four or five miles from London — Well, people who have two or three carriages, & horses [illegible] 'em such a [illegible] in that [illegible] — she wanted us to go and dine there on Sunday, & then she would take us to Sydenham to see the Palace, & the fire-works in the eve'g — to come back to Broom House to pass the night, & return here Tuesday — So we agreed, & that is next weeks programme for the first — The week after we are to go to Mr. Darwin's for some days —

Thursday was not so bright a day but about 11 mother, George, Misses Goddard and Lothrop appeared — a little before, came a letter from Lizzie to me, so mother could have the news — And she brought yours & Chas.' of Sept. 27th —

We sent for the Bath Chair & set out for the Garden — We could only take a part of course, with them first time the temperate ferns, aloe & cactus house, ornamental house, tropical ferns — recently enlarged & just arranged, so lovely with tree ferns & hanging ferns, & masses of great foliage, & delicate maiden-hairs, &c. &c.) then the palm house, & up to the temperate house — Thence I came directly back leaving them to go to the curious drum house, one of the larger buildings, with tree ferns 30 ft. high — They could only go to the museum of woods, had to leave the others — But they all seemed interested & pleased; but it was a good long tramp — They came back here to lunch, cold meat & baked potatoes, bread & butter & cheese, & a rice-pudding, & some apples & grapes — grapes ~~here~~ are only 1/ a lb — & very good. Black Hamburg) Then we got a fly, already bespoke at the "Coach & Horses", & they set out with Dr. Gray for Hampton Court — Drove through Richmond Park, with the beautiful view of Twickenham, through Bushy & Hampton Parks — they were rather late at the Palace & had to hurry through, but saw the gardens & the great grape vine so very old, filling a house — the grapes are cut for the Queen at Xmas, & sometimes the vine has borne a ton! — Then they drove back through Teddington (by the lock vide Mutual Friend,) & Twickenham, (cf. Pope's Strawberry Hill, &c. &c. & took the train at Twickenham for London, Dr. Gray keeping on back to Kew —

Yesterday morn'g Dr. Gray & I took the North London train to the City — I went to Sharlands' where I dealt 18 years ago — Wanted some cotton for underclothes, paid 13d. a yard, which if you put it into gold is much dearer than at home — it was like New York Mills cotton — Silk, for an apron, 4/6 the yd. Nothing is cheap that I have seen so far, but buttons & tape! — Mother comes to the same conclusion with me, that if you want to come abroad, supply yourself completely at home — you can get there what you want, you may buy cheaper or dearer, & less trouble — Here you can buy nice things, but very dear, & a good deal of trouble — Her party have done a good deal of shopping & they find as I do, everything but gloves so expensive — Stockings 2/6, 3/, 3/6, gold — I can get what I want at home for .50 or .75 paper — Even Balbriggan at Hovey's 1.25 — I have not tried dress-making & sewing yet — Hats 3 guineas, & upwards. my undervests were too small, & I changed them for larger 9/3, paper $2.31! We stopped in St Paul's Church Yard for brushes, 3 tooth-brushes 2/6, paper, say .90 those are cheaper — Hair brush 4/6 — Then we took a 'bus to British Museum, meeting mother & party, except Miss Lothrop — it is such an immensity, the Br. Mus., ~~that~~ one can only glance at things, unless you take some specialty — The Assyrian bulls & a lion, huge, from — last